

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 8, 10-13, 18 and 19 are presently in the case. Claims 1-5, 8, 10-13, 18 and 19 have been amended and Claims 6, 7, 9 and 14-17 have been cancelled by way of the present amendment. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

First, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Kornakov for his suggestions for amending the claims during telephone interviews with Applicant's representatives on May 12, 2003, and May 13, 2003. To that end, Claims 1-5, 8, 10-13, 18 and 19 have been amended to clarify the invention. In particular, claims 1, 8 and 11 have been amended to clarify the invention by reciting a "mist-containing saturated steam." Applicants respectfully note that there are two types of saturated steam: (1) mist-containing saturated steam and (2) non mist-containing saturated steam. The claimed invention uses mist-containing saturated steam. Moreover, using a *mist-containing saturated stream* provides a *lift-off effect* in contacting a surface to be purified. Specifically, claims 1 and 8 have been amended to recite:

means for generating mist-containing saturated steam; . . .
means for bringing said mist-containing saturated steam into contact with a surface of each of said substrates; and
means for spraying said mist-containing saturated steam onto said surface,
wherein said mist-containing saturated steam is used to purify said surface.

Claim 11 has been amended with similar language. Additionally, claim 19 has been further amended to clarify the invention and recites:

wherein said surface is a silicon substrate, and said silicon surface is made to be a hydrogen termination structure by steam-processing silicon exposed on said silicon substrate surface such that the peak ratios of Si-O/Si-H are at most 0.05.

Support for the amendments is shown at least in Fig. 1 and provided at least on page 18, lines 5-25, page 29, lines 8-11 and page 34 lines 1-6 of the specification. Therefore, the amendments raise no question of new matter.

In view of the above, examination of the claims on the merits is respectfully requested. The Director is hereby authorized to charge any fees, or credit any overpayment, associated with this communication, including any extension fees, to CBLH Deposit Account No. 22-0185.

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Respectfully submitted,

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